

## Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 082816

FOLLOWING REPEAT MADRID 2483 ACTION SECSTATE INFO PEKING

PARIS TAIPEI ROME USIA 22 APR

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2483

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SP CH TS

SUBJ: PRC EMBASSY CONTINUES BARRAGE OF PROTESTS

1. MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NORTH AMERICAN AND FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS (PERINAT) TOLD EMBOFF ON APRIL 17 THAT HIGH LEVEL PRC EMBASSY OFFICIAL HAD COMPLAINED TO HIM THAT AMERICAN EMBASSY PLANNED TWO SHOWINGS AT MADRID PRESS CENTER OF VIDEO TAPE ON CHINA BY ANTONIONI. ACCORDING PERINAT, PRC DIPLOMAT APPEALED TO HIM TO DO SOMETHING TO PREVENT SHOWINGS, CHARACTERIZING FILM AS "OFFENSIVE TO CHINA."

2. PRC EMBASSY OFFICIAL PRESUMABLY REFERRING TO VIDEO TAPE SHOW OF ANTONIONI FILM, "CHINA," SCHEDULED AT USIS PRESS CENTER APRIL 18 AND 25 AS EVENT IN CENTER'S APRIL PROGRAM. ANTONIONI FILM WAS ORIGINALLY PRODUCED FOR ABC AND RAI ITALIAN TV. IT WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO USIS MADRID THROUGH NORMAL USIA WASHINGTON DISTRIBUTION. SHOWINGS WERE FORMALLY ANNOUNCED IN PRESS CENTER'S MONTHLY PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES TO ITS REGULAR

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LIST OF SELECTED JOURNALISTS.

3. IN PASSING ON PRC COMPLAINT, PERINAT CAREFULLY STRESSED NO GOS PRESSURE WAS INTENDED AND THAT HE WAS LETTING US KNOW IN SPIRIT OF INFORMALITY AND FRIENDSHIP. HE EMPHASIZED THAT MATTER WAS OF LIMITED IMPORTANCE AND THAT HIS RAISING IT SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED IN ANY WAY AS ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE WITH USIS CULTURAL ACTIVITIES HERE. IN FACT, HE SAW MORE HUMOR THAN GRAVITY IN AFFAIR, NOTING THAT PRC IS SHOWING SOME OF SAME HUMORLESSNESS THEY DISPLAYED IN CONFLICT WITH FRENCH OVER FILM ON FICTIONAL CHINESE INVASION OF PARIS. BUT HE WENT ON TO SAY, FROM A PERSONAL STANDPOINT, THIS WAS ONLY ONE OF A NUMBER OF ISSUES ON WHICH GOS WAS BEING PRESSED BY THE CHINESE AND IT WOULD OF COURSE EASE HIS POSITION TO BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE THEIR CONCERN IN SOME WAY. HE THOUGHT SOME COMPROMISE GESTURE WOULD BE FEASIBLE THAT WOULD PARTIALLY PACIFY PRC WHILE NOT COMPROMISING PRESS AND CULTURAL CENTERS.

4. AFTER CAREFULLY CONSIDERING PROS AND CONS OF ISSUE RAISED BY MFA, THE DECISION WAS MADE TO HOLD APRIL 18 SHOWING AS PLANNED BUT TO CANCEL APRIL 25 SHOWING. PERINAT WAS INFORMED THAT APRIL 18 SHOWING WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO CANCEL ON WUCH SHORT NOTICE BUT THAT WE WOULD QUIETLY PASS WORD TO NORMAL PRESS CENTER PATRONS THAT SECOND SHOWING "POSTPONED." PERINAT APPRECIATED US MOVE AND BELIEVED IT WOULD BE ENOUGH TO SAVE CHINESE FACE. EMBOFF TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO SUGGEST THAT, IN SIMILAR CASES IN FUTURE, HE COULD REMOVE HIMSELF FROM DISPUTE BY SUGGESTING THAT PRC DIPLOMATS CONVEY THEIR CONCERN DIRECTLY TO EMBASSY. (VIDEO TAPE SHOWING APRIL 18 WAS ATTENDED BY 28 SPANISH JOURNALISTS, WHO WERE ATTRACTED AS MUCH BY ANTONIONI'S CINEMATIC REPUTATION AS BY INTEREST IN CHINA.)

5. PERINAT DISCUSSED BARRAGE OF DEMARCHES AND PROTESTS ON VARIETY OF SUBJECTS MFA IS RECEIVING FROM PRC EMBASSY. HE STATED THAT THEY REGULARLY COMPLAIN AT DIPLOMATIC LEVEL OVER ROUTINE ARTICLES IN SPANISH PRESS ABOUT TAIWAN, CHIANG KAI-SHEK, PRC LEADERS, OR INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA, EVEN THOUGH IN MOST CASES SUCH ARTICLES ORIGINATED WITH INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICES OUTSIDE OF SPAIN. AS EXAMPLE, HE CITED APPOINTMENT HE HAS WITH PRC COUNSELOR APRIL 19 TO RECEIVE COMPLAINT ABOUT ABC PUBLICATION OF WIRE SERVICE STORY EARLIER IN WEEK STATING THAT 20 PERSONS HAD BEEN EXECUTED

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IN CHINA FOR THEIR ADHERENCE TO CONFUCIONISM. HE ALSO NOTED THAT SPANISH SUGGESTION THAT PRC MIGHT WISH TO ESTABLISH PAVILLION IN FORTHCOMING BARCELONA TRADE FAIR HAD PRODUCED SERIES OF DEMARCHES, PROGRESSIVELY DEMANDING (1) ORAL ASSURANCES TAIWAN WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE, (2) ORAL ASSURANCES TAIWAN HAD NEVER BEEN INVITED AND (3) WRITTEN ASSURANCES THAT TAIWAN HAD NEVER BEEN INVITED.

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